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177 492 formerly had a few riding oxen. Both of these are due to European contact. The Tsimahety, at the northern end of the plateau, use oxen as pack animals and apparently have done so since pre-European times. The loads are placed in cloth bags, which are slung across the animal behind the hump, one hanging on each side.

233 556 It is safe to say that if all the cattle belonging to the Tanala Menabe were destroyed over night, no member of the tribe would miss a meal or suffer any other serious hardship. Their loss would be somewhat more serious to the Ikongo, but they would still be able to get along quite well without them. In spite of this lack of practical value, cattle are everywhere of great social importance. [454] With the possible exception of slaves, which no longer exist, they represent the only form of interest-bearing investment possible under native conditions. Every man tries to accumulate as many as possible and his standing in the community is largely determined by [777] the size of his herd. Charms to increase the fertility of cattle are common and cattle are only sold or killed in case of absolute necessity. They are regarded almost as members of the family and the idiosyncrasies of each animal are well known. One informant told me that they are the only animals which possess souls. They are not regarded [782] as sacred, but the killing of an ox, either as a sacrifice or for meat, is an integral part of practically all important ceremonies.

685 556 Although the Tanala consider ordinary theft as one of the most serious of all offenses, cattle stealing is regarded as honorable so long as the members of one's own village are not molested. In fact, it is considered a proper occupation for a young man of spirit and offers an easy road to wealth and advancement. The native attitude is comparable to that of our own Plains Indians toward horse [721] stealing. Cattle formed the most important part of the spoil in warfare and a successful theft was in the nature of a war exploit. European efforts to suppress it have rather heightened the thief's prestige by increasing his hazards.

541 764 Bull baiting and watching fighting bulls were both important sports in pre-European times. They still persist, but are becoming rare. I could get no information on bull baiting among the Ikongo, but it was probably a regular part of important funerals there, as among the Menabe. In the latter group it was customary, in the course of the funeral festivities, to drive up one or two bulls. These were baited by the young men, who would incite them to charge and then avoid their rushes, swing by their tails, leap on their backs, etc. A favorite trick was to await the charge, catch the bull's

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apprenticeship. A boy who becomes interested in the trade will hang about the smith's workshop, blowing the bellows for him and doing other minor tasks. Finally he will be allowed to help with the forging and may accompany the smith on his travels. When he thinks that he knows the trade, he will set up in business for himself. No regular payment is made to the teacher, but if the new smith prospers, it is customary for him to visit his former master, thank him publicly, and present him with an ox.

Every smith has a house and land in some particular village and spends most of his time there. During the slack season between harvest and the next planting, the smiths travel about repairing old implements and forging new ones. When a man is in need of the smith's services, he first bargains with him, then, when the price has been fixed, takes him into his house and feeds him until the task is completed. Smiths seem to be much more numerous among the Ikongo than among the Menabe.

The stonecutters are mostly Betsileo living among the Tanala. They go where their services are required and are similarly boarded during the work.

As far as I could learn, there are no ceremonial observances or taboos connected with any industry. There seem to be no charms to give success in occupations, with the possible exception of house building, although I was unable to get a satisfactory check on this for metal working.

METAL WORKING

According to Tanala traditions, the aborigines of their territory were ignorant of the use of metal, but the ancestors of all the invading gentes were familiar with iron at the time they entered the region. The next metal to become known to them was silver. There are no known deposits of silver ore in Madagascar and the metal was certainly obtained from Arabs or Europeans. Nevertheless, the Tanala have no legends of its introduction. It has been thoroughly incorporated into the culture, figuring in the invocations to the gods and in a number of rites and ceremonies. In general, it seems to occupy the place that gold occupies among the tribes of the plateau and west coast.

Gold, in the form of dust or small nuggets, is found throughout much of the Tanala territory, but the Tanala themselves make no use of it and seem to have no beliefs in regard to it. It does not figure in any ceremony, and is mentioned in only one or two invocations.

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illness or before beginning the activity in which supernatural aid is hoped for, but are usually made after help has been received, in fulfilment of a vow.

Vows are called *tsikafara*. To make a vow is *manovava* and to fulfil one *manalavava*. A vow may be made by any one at any time or place in case of sudden danger or other emergency, but deliberate vows, especially those for the cure of illness, seem usually to be made by the village priest at the head of the sick person's bed. An ox is given to the priest by the person or his family after his recovery. Most vows are made publicly, the people of the village being called on to witness them. In the vow, the nature of the sacrifice, as a black ox, is specified and often the place where it will be performed, but there seems to be no fixed formula. All vows are rigidly fulfilled, for failure in this would result in the death of the individual and possibly the wiping out of his entire family by the enraged spirits.

Although all Tanala sacrifices conform to a general pattern there seems to be an almost infinite variation in details. Each gens has its own invocation and even different lineages within a gens may have peculiarities of procedure. From accounts of participants it seems that even two sacrifices performed by the same priest for the same purpose are rarely identical at all points. These individual variations are not due to carelessness, or to a poor development of ritual, but reflect a feeling that the circumstances surrounding two sacrifices are never the same. In approaching the gods and ancestors the workings of fate must also be considered. Each day has its special significance, with favorable and unfavorable aspects (see *Vintana*, pp. 212–214) and each individual has a particular destiny. These must be taken into account to obtain results, and it is for this reason that *ombiasy* are consulted as to the best place, day and exact procedure for each sacrifice. The methods used by the *ombiasy* in determining these details are known only to themselves and the priests follow their directions blindly.

In most of the Menabe gentes the sacrificial procedure is as follows: The place of sacrifice may be indicated in a vow; if not, it is chosen by an *ombiasy*. Most sacrifices are performed at the *ampiseofana*, the village sacred place, where the memorial stones to the ancestors have been erected (see Erection of Memorial Stones). These stones are set up in pairs, a flat slab resting on a tripod of small stones, called the *vato vavy* ("female stone") and a tall upright stone called the *vato lahy* ("male stone"). The *vato lahy* is erected

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entered the profession deliberately. Although they made their activities as mysterious as possible, to impress the uninitiated, their own attitude toward their work seemed to me to be sane and almost scientific. They practiced some deliberate trickery and sleight of hand, but were sincere in their belief in the efficacy of their charms and divination and were on the lookout for anything which would increase their efficiency. On occasion, they experimented with new charms and remedies and when established ones failed they ascribed it to error of some sort rather than malevolent counter activity. Although they never confessed their mistakes to their patients and were extraordinarily clever at shifting the blame for failure to them, they seemed to admit their errors to themselves. After many discussions with them I was convinced that they were no more conservative or self-assured than the average European doctor of a hundred years ago.

The profession of *ombiasy nkazo* is open to any free person, and is selected by bright young men in much the same spirit that one of us would enter medicine or the law. The aspirant goes to an *ombiasy* of established reputation and asks to be instructed, paying him an initial fee of 0.20 franc. Each piece of instruction is then paid for separately. The first thing learned is the *sikidy*, a mechanical method of divination. When this has been mastered the student pays his instructor 5.00 francs. He then learns the calendar of lucky and unlucky days, or some other method of determining whether a given day is propitious. The fee for this and the subsequent items is fixed by bargaining, while that for the *sikidy* is constant. When the calendar has been learned, the student buys directions for making a number of charms for various purposes, paying for them piece by piece. When he thinks his repertoire is large enough, he leaves his teacher and sets up as an independent practitioner. There is nothing in the nature of an examination and no final fee. It is considered etiquette for the new *ombiasy* to make a substantial present to his teacher when he has become well established, but this is not obligatory. An ambitious man continues his education throughout life, visiting other *ombiasy* to learn charms and remedies which have proved unusually effective. All agreed that there was no one *ombiasy* in the tribe who knew all charms and medicines.

The *ombiasy* are not organized and each one guards his own secrets, sometimes to the extent of refusing to sell. There is little professional etiquette, patients breaking off relations with one *ombiasy* and going to another at will. At the same time, there seems to be little real

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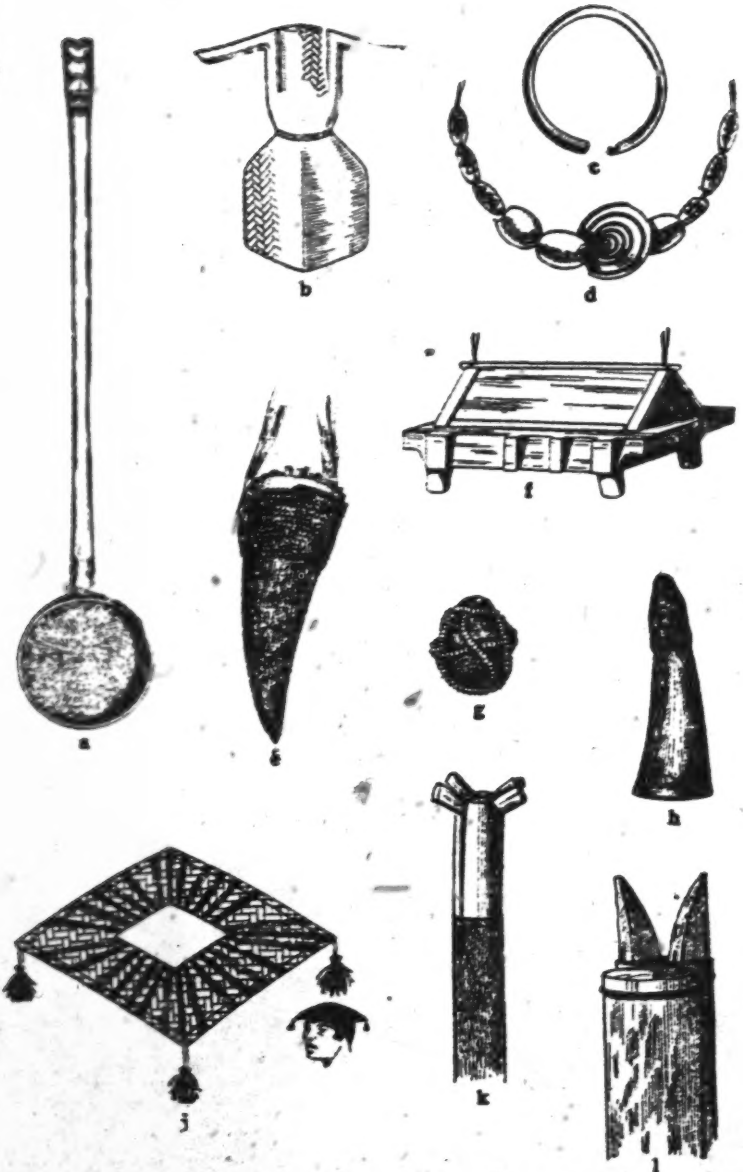

FIG. 23. Ceremonial Objects. a, Sacrificial Ladle; b, Basket for Divining Set; c, Charm Bracelet; d, Charm Necklace; e, Charm for General Good Fortune; f, Charm in Form of Coffin; g, Charm for Good Health; h, Cupping Horn; i, Hat of *Salampanga*; k, Post for Sacrifice of First Rice (*faiotra*); l, Post for Circumcision Sacrifice.

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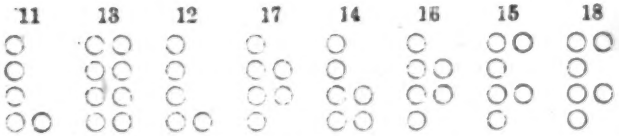

The new groupings are formed by combining the original groupings as follows:

Groups	in	positions	7	and	8	give	group	in	position	11
"	"	"	5	"	6	"	"	"	"	12
"	"	"	11	"	12	"	"	"	"	13
"	"	"	1	"	2	"	"	"	"	14
"	"	"	3	"	4	"	"	"	"	15
"	"	"	14	"	15	"	"	"	"	16
"	"	"	13	"	16	"	"	"	"	17
"	"	"	17	"	4	"	"	"	"	18

The positions in the new figure have the following meanings:

11. Spirit or ghost.
12. Food.
13. *Ombiasy* (the practitioner himself).
14. Father.
15. Road.
16. Mother, or reunion.
17. God.
18. House or home.

The new figure is compared with the *trano* given by position 4 in the original figure and groupings not in this *trano* are ignored. In the example only one position and grouping are significant: *Asimbola* (1 in south *trano*), which means alarm or burning. It occurs in position 13, representing the practitioner. It reinforces the "short combat" significance of the grouping in position 5 in the original figure.

Interpretation is by association of ideas. Apparently there is some variation in the practice of different *ombiasy*. Although the names of the groupings are always the same, the significances may vary somewhat. The methods of combining to give the second figure are also somewhat variable. In most of the tribes which use this method these features appear to be stereotyped and I suspect that the Tanala variations are due to an imperfect knowledge of the system.

DETERMINATION OF LUCKY AND UNLUCKY DAYS

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One of the main duties of the *ombiasy* is to determine propitious days for sacrifices, the commencement of enterprises, etc. The

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destiny of a child is also determined by the day of its birth and the *ombiasy* must discover what this is, and, if evil, take steps to change it.

The Tanala year consists of twelve lunar months called *volona* (lit. "moon"). These run continuously and there seems to be no idea of the year beginning with any one of them. The Menabe month names are as follows:

January, *Vatravatra*	May, *Afosa*	September, *Shakave*
February, *Asotry*	June, *Bolaha*	October, *Volambita*
March, *Hatsiha*	July, *Maka*	November, *Sharamasina*
April, *Valasira*	August, *Shakashe*	December, *Sharamanitra*

The month begins with the new moon and continues twenty-eight days. Each month is characterized by certain climatic features, the blooming of a certain plant, etc., and when the month count seems to lag too far behind the seasons a month is repeated. This is done informally and by general consent. There is no central authority to which the rectification of the calendar can be referred. Each month is divided into four weeks of seven days.

Among the Menabe the month count is only used incidentally in determining lucky and unlucky days. At the present time the better practitioners use a regular calendar based on the position of the days in the month, but all informants agreed that this is a recent innovation, learned from the Antaimorona tribe. I did not learn how the significance of birth days was determined in ancient times. Lucky days for activities were determined as follows:

The time from new to full moon was propitious for sacrifices and beginning enterprises; the time while the moon was waning was not propitious. Thursdays and Sundays were also unpropitious and children born on these days had a bad destiny. In appointing the time for a sacrifice or beginning an enterprise the latter half of the month and Thursdays and Sundays were eliminated. The *ombiasy* then selected one of the remaining days at random and made the shorter form of seed *sikidy*. If the arrangement ○○ *Asimbola* appeared in the positions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12 and 16, the day was propitious. The *sikidy* was repeated five times and if this arrangement did not appear, another day was tried.

The calendar now used to determine lucky and unlucky days is as follows, the month beginning on Monday.

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FIRST WEEK

Monday (*Alatsinainy*).....*Ravena*, "leaves." A propitious day.

Tuesday (*Talata*).....*Vahana*, "root." Idea of attachment and continuance. Good day for planting, marriage, or house building, but bad to become ill on, to pay fines or debts on, etc. A death on this day means other deaths in the family.

Wednesday (*Alarobia*).....*Alamahady* (month name). A very good day, a keen day, a red day. A child born on this day has a royal destiny.

Thursday (*Alakamisy*).....*Ambotona*, "to dig." A good day, especially favorable for building cattle pens and planting.

Friday (*Zoma*).....*Ankodidy*, "enclosed." A good day for everything.

Saturday (*Sabotsy*).....*Alahasaty* (month name). A favorable birthday. The child will be strong.

Sunday (*Alahady*).....*Fiaravany*, "diminishing." A good day to set out on a war party, as the enemy will be diminished, but otherwise bad.

SECOND WEEK

Monday.....*Lohasimbola*, "Head of the month *Asimbola*." A good day for everything.

Tuesday.....*Loava*, "laid waste." A bad day for everything.

Wednesday.....*Varasorotany*, "mouth of Asorotany" (a month). A good birthday. The child will have long life and good health.

Thursday.....*Ankandrony*, "small lake or pool without outlet." A good day. Anything received on this day cannot get away.

Friday.....*Sandrasody*, "forbidden to return." Bad for marriage and journeys, but good for making tombs and funerals.

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Saturday.....*Alakarabo* (month name). Good for cultivating crops, but a child born on this day will be sickly.

Sunday.....*Ankaravoany*, "pleasure." Best day for fêtes, etc.

THIRD WEEK

Monday.....*Alakaosy* (month name). A good day for everything.

Tuesday.....*Atsidiny*, "entering." A good day to hunt for bee trees, also to lay off mourning.

Wednesday.....*Alakaforo*, "lost." A bad day, especially for building or marrying.

Thursday.....*Ankonkony*, "reinforced." Anything one gets this day will increase.

Friday.....*Soria* (not translated. Nearly the same word as that for meat). A good day for hunting but a bad one to buy cattle as they will die or be killed for meat.

Saturday.....*Antalo* (not translated). A good day for everything.

Sunday.....*Fanoniriany*, "wish fulfilled." A good day, especially favorable for making charms.

FOURTH WEEK

Monday.....*Lohalohotsy*, "head of *Alahotsy*" (a month). A good day for everything.

Tuesday.....*Farany* or *Faralohotsy*, "last." Good for everything. An enterprise begun this day will end well even if it does badly at first.

Wednesday.....*Andranomaso*, "weeping." A bad day for everything.

Thursday.....*Apaningany*, "departure." Good for marriages and commencing journeys.

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Friday ..... *Ahifiny*, "thrown away." Good for bad things but bad for good ones. Best day to put off mourning, treat sickness, etc., but bad for marriage as it will lead to divorce.

Saturday ..... *Alohadaro*, "head of *Adaro*" (a month). Good for construction and business.

Sunday ..... *Faminany*, "to grasp tightly." Good for cattle buying, marriages, and the purchase of some charms.

The month names given to certain days in the calendar are those used by the Antaimorona. The calendar as a whole is known as the *rinta* or *rintana*.

IKONGO CALENDAR FOR DIVINATION

[113] [The following is a free translation of an article published by Captain Ardant du Picq in the Bulletin de l'Academie Malgache, vol. X, 1912, pp. 263–266.]

The Tanala Ikongo divide the time into cycles of twelve years, each year into twelve months and each month into twelve weeks of two or three days each.

THE CYCLES AND THE YEARS.—Each of the twelve years of the cycle bears a different name. The cycle revolves, the thirteenth year taking the first name again. This is a list of the years with the peculiarities which the *ombiasy* ascribes to each:

1. *Aiahamaly* ..... Only young girls will give birth.
2. *Asaora* ..... The bulls will bellow and there will be plenty of rice.
3. *Alizaoza* ..... Only boys will be born and these will later have all the women they desire.
4. *Asaratany* ..... The thunder will be violent.
5. *Alahasady* ..... Men born in this year will be vigorous, great boar hunters, expert at throwing the spear.
6. *Asimbola* ..... Girls born in this year will know how to sing well and boys how to tell lies well.

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7. *Alimizana*.....Boys who are born will become kings or chiefs of tribes.
8. *Alakarabo*.....Girls born in this year will lead irregular lives while the boys will be industrious.
9. *Alakaosy*.....Children born will be sorcerers and will have many progeny.
10. *Alizady*.....Rain is abundant and the crocodiles dangerous.
11. *Adalo*.....*Salamanga* (spirit possession) will be the cause of all illness.
12. *Alohotsy*.....All old people who become ill will die.

The twelve years of this cycle bear the same names as the twelve weeks of the Ikongo month.

THE MONTHS.—The twelve months of the Ikongo year are as follows:

1. *Sakasay*.—In this month the vine *roimainty* flowers and the *harongana* flowers for the third time.
2. *Sakave*.
3. *Volambita*.—In this month general flowering begins, new shoots put forth and the birds mate.
4. *Asaromantsy*.—Flowering is at its height. The *harongana* flowers for the first time.
5. *Asarâmanitra*.
6. *Vatravatra*.—Second flowering of the *harongana*. Fruits ripen.
7. *Asotry*.—Time of heaviest rain.
8. *Atsiha*.—The rice becomes ripe.
9. *Valasira*.—Harvest time.
10. *Faosa*.
11. *Maka*.—The coldest month, the manioc loses its leaves.
12. *Hiahia*.

The month *Vatravatra* corresponds to January. The rainy season extends from *Asaromantsy* to *Valasira* inclusive.

THE DAYS.—The Tanala month is a lunar month of twenty-eight days. The days are grouped in twelve weeks of two or three days each. Each of these has something peculiar to it. According to the diviners one can tell the color of an ox without seeing it if one knows the day on which it bellows. The days also determine the sex of the

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805 777 [942] 553 children born on them. On the first, or first two days of each of the twelve weeks only boys will be born, on the last day only girls. The *ombiasy* gives them names determined by the days of their birth. The following table gives the names of the weeks and days and the peculiarities of each.

Weeks	Days	Color of the Ox that Bellows	Name of Children: Boys	Name of Children: Girls
1. Alahamaly (3 days)	1. Lohanalahamaly	Red		
	2. Vontonalahamaly	Spots of white on the hump, head and limbs	Idama	
	3. Faranalahamaly	White face, one horn broken		Ihaova
2. Asaora (2 days)	4. Asaora	Red and white spots	Isoza	
	5. Alahaka	Mouth edged with white		Isiza
3. Alizaoza (2 days)	6. Lohanalizaoza	Speckled black and white	Imosa	
	7. Faranalizaoza	Speckled only on the stomach		Imasy
4. Asaratany (3 days)	8. Lohanasaratany	Striped black and white	Isambo	
	9. Vontonasaratany	Two white spots on the flanks		
	10. Faranasaratany	White end of tail		Isana
5. Alahasady (2 days)	11. Lohanalahasady	Red stripe on the back to the hump	Ihasa	
	12. Faranalahasady	Yellow		Itema
6. Asimbola (2 days)	13. Lohanasombola	Mostly white	Iboba	
	14. Faranasombola	White with the top of the hump black		Ivola
7. Alimizana (3 days)	15. Lohanalimizaha	Chestnut color	Imonja	
	16. Vontonalimizaha	Piebald		
	17. Faranalimizaha	Yellow		Imija
8. Alakarabo (2 days)	18. Lohanalakarabo	Without a spot	Imoha	
	19. Faranalakarobo	Black with red reflection in sun		Imoma
9. Alakaosy (2 days)	20. Lohanalakaosy	Red nape of neck	Ijo	
	21. Faranalakaosy	White spots on throat		Imaho
10. Alizady (2 days)	22. Lohanalizady	White spots on cheeks	Iharo	
	23. Vontonalizady	White pasterns		
	24. Faranalizady	Dirty white		
11. Adala	25. Lohanadalo	A large white spot on each flank	Imara	
	26. Faranadalo	Red, showing yellow when stroked		Ikaly
12. Alohotsy (2 days)	27. Lohanalohotsy	Face and hump white	Ibabila	
	28. Faranalohotsy	Pure white		Inoor

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Friday, January 1, 1904, was, in the Tanala style, the second day 805
of the tenth week of the sixth month of the year *Adalo* (the first year of a cycle). Once this correspondence has been established it is easy to prepare a comparative calendar.

To count the days, the *ombiasy* has a piece of bamboo pierced with twenty-eight holes, arranged in groups of two or three, according to the number of days in each week. A pin is used as a marker, being moved daily.

The Menabe apparently lack such bamboo calendars, but keep day counts by means of notched wooden tallies and knotted strings. These are sometimes used for other numerical records as well.

DIVINATION BY THE STARS

The Tanala Menabe do not forecast events from the stars, but 787
they know that such divination exists and believe it to be effective. Apparently it is sometimes practiced by visiting *ombiasy* of the Antaimorona tribe, but they guard the secret. Information received from the Tanala is based on hearsay. They say that divination by the stars requires a lifetime of study, and that one who devotes himself to it must expect many years of poverty. He must go out to watch the stars every clear night, so has to sleep in the daytime and cannot work on his land. The student of the stars goes to a high open place and keeps glancing at the sky and then glancing away again. He must not look at the stars long or fixedly, for each man has one which is his special watcher or guardian and if he looks directly at this he will die. Even among the Antaimorona I was unable to learn whether there were any fixed rules for this divination.

SPELLS

A very striking feature of Tanala magic is the almost complete 788
absence of any belief in the efficacy of spoken formulae. Practically all magical practices are associated with some material object, which is the source of the power exercised. Even in the manufacture of charms spoken formulae are rare and, when used, they are variable in form and are considered of little importance.

MANUFACTURE AND USE OF CHARMS

The Tanala believe that the future is fixed by Fate, but also in the 777
efficacy of charms. I have never found an *ombiasy* who was conscious 789
of this inconsistency until I brought it to his attention. Even when the course of coming events has been determined by divination, the

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777 789 future can nearly always be modified by the proper magic. This magic takes the form of a charm which is worn, soaked in water which is then drunk or bathed in, etc. Even medicines given for the cure of illness always follow the charm pattern.

The native attitude toward charms is of considerable interest in view of the theories of primitive magic now extant. Their manufacture is a thoroughly mechanical process. They can be made by anyone who knows the proper formulae and adheres to them. Many persons who make no pretensions to being *ombiasy* are familiar with one or more charms which they regularly manufacture and sell. The manufacture of most charms is not accompanied by invocations and there is no belief that the charm is inhabited by a ghost or spirit, or even that it serves as a link between its owner and any Being. The charm owes its efficacy to its various ingredients and to the exact proportions and manner in which they are compounded. The magical potency of the finished product is, however, greater than the sum of the potencies of its ingredients, in fact the ingredients individually have little or no potency. The charm retains its potency indefinitely, its strength increasing rather than decreasing with age. Some charms are so strong that they become animate and can move and speak, but even then they do not require sacrifices or special service.

[178] The foregoing facts strongly suggest the presence of a belief in *mana*, i.e., impersonal magical power, which is concentrated and made available by the charm, but I am convinced that no such concept is consciously present. There is no native word for such power and I found great difficulty in explaining the idea to even the most intelligent of my informants. The Tanala are thoroughly convinced that the charms possess supernatural power which is exerted in favor of their owners, but no ideas as to the source or nature of this power, or as to the exact way in which it is applied, have been formulated. The natives are unconscious of any need for formulation. In this they are quite comparable to persons in our own culture who believe in the efficacy of lucky coins, etc., without being able to explain why they are efficacious.

The Tanala have charms for every phase of their existence and a complete list would be a catalogue of all their activities and vicissitudes. There are charms to aid the individual, the family and the village. Individual charms are the most numerous. They include charms to bring general good fortune, to avert or cure illness, to avert specific injuries, as from gunshot wounds, lightning or crocodiles, to frustrate enemies and render their charms innocuous, to

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give success in all possible activities, to bring wealth and to kill enemies. Charms for the family or lineage include those to bring general good fortune, to protect the crops from hail or locusts, to avert sickness, etc. Lastly, each village has its charm or charms which are given to it at the time it is founded and protect it from pestilence or enemy attack or both. 777 789

Most charms are compounds, but there are a few exceptions. A bracelet of thick brass or copper wire (Fig. 23, c) protects the wearer from all sorts of malevolent ghosts and consequently from attacks of vertigo, drowning and, some believe, crocodiles. Vertigo and drowning are thought due to the attack of spirits, while crocodiles may be under spirit control. No magic is connected with the manufacture of these bracelets. They are made by the Imerina and sold by all traders. 777 [438]

Large, roughly spherical beads of translucent white glass, half an inch in diameter, were formerly considered powerful charms to insure general good fortune. They were usually worn attached to a lock of hair (Fig. 22, f). They were the most suitable gift from a man to a beloved wife or child and were highly valued, good examples being worth as much as an ox. At the present time they have largely gone out of use. These beads are not of native manufacture, and their source is unknown. They were probably obtained from the Arabs in early times. The wearing of other beads as charms is not a Tanala custom, but they are gradually coming into use as a result of contact with the plateau tribes. The use of beads as charms reaches its highest development among the Imerina, who distinguish at least fifty different sorts, each with its special magical quality.

A piece of vine which has turned back on itself and grown through the loop, forming a knot, or two twigs which have crossed each other and grown together, make an efficient love charm. It may be cut and used or sold by anyone who finds it. Such charms are never worn openly. [432]

Most charms are compounds. Vegetable substances predominate, but earth, insects, bones, etc., may also be incorporated. The mixture is put in a container of some sort so that it can be readily worn or carried. *Ody zaza* (charms to obtain children) must be done up in cloth and a few other charms are not efficacious unless they are put up in wood. Usually, however, the container does not affect the powers of the charm and its form varies with the fancy of the maker. Most Tanala charms are put up in small, cylindrical

[See category 116, p. 205 - analyst]

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777 wooden boxes with or without covers. Small rectangular boxes are also used and there are a few fantastic shapes, like the coffin model shown in Fig. 23, f. This is a charm for success in wrestling and the shape of the box may be significant. Some of the larger charms for general good fortune, which are kept in the dwelling, are put up in finely woven covered baskets. Horn containers, which are very common among the southern and western tribes, are rarely used [531] here (Fig. 23, e). Such containers may be decorated with a band of bead work around the larger end, but this is purely for ornament.

777 824 Few formulae for charms were obtained. They have to be bought individually, often at exorbitant prices, and there is no way of checking on their authenticity. One *ody basy* (charm to protect against gunshot wounds) is made by placing together pieces of wood from the following trees or bushes: (1) *Tsihabeza*, tree, virtues not defined. (2) *Vahita*, a vigorously growing bush. This gives strength and vitality. (3) *Aniro*, a species of palm with hard wood. Gives the person a hard surface. (4) *Berano* (lit. "much water"), a plant. This turns the enemy's bullets to water as they leave the gun. (5) *Tsilaitra* (lit. "impenetrable"), a tree. This makes invulnerable. (6) *Vahimavany* (lit. "brave creeper"), a vine. This makes brave. (7) *Kelimitany* (lit. "little brave"), a small tree. This makes brave. (8) *Famehilefona*, a tree. This protects from spears. (9) *Famakibady* (lit. "gun breaker"), a tree. This will cause the enemies' guns to explode. The substances are gathered and combined without any spell or ceremony and put in a container of wood or horn. They are usually soaked with grease or honey, but this is not necessary.

754 777 [824] A charm used for killing an enemy is more complicated. Take a root from the west side of the *arongana* ("poinsettia") plant and one from the east side of the *hazodinga* (a plant). Take the end of an aerial root of the *tsirikomby* (a large tree, apparently of the fig family) just before it touches the ground, also a root of the *longoza* (a large-leafed plant like a caladium, growing in water) before it [825] touches the water. Add to these a small insect called *sakodiasatra* which lives in rotten wood. Pound the materials together in a mortar and fill the shell of a fresh-water snail with the mixture. The person who wishes to use this charm takes it and seven grains of rice, which have been husked by hand, and goes to a new tomb, usually at night. He makes a hole in the earth at the head of the tomb and names the person to be killed. He then waits until he hears any animal cry. After this he places the charm and the seven

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grains of rice in the hole and covers them with earth, saying: "There 754
is your food. Go into the tomb." After this he dances at the tomb. 777

A charm which protects from the stings of scorpions is made by 751
taking inner leaves from the unopened center of the pandanus, 278
small peppers and the roots of *tsingolozolo*, a sort of grass. These are ground together on a stone and a little of the material rubbed into incisions on the palm of the hand and the tongue. A single inoculation gives immunity for life. The person can even pick up scorpions with impunity if he spits on them first.

It has already been said that the Tanala *ombiasy* are not averse 777
to experiments, and they will invent new charm compounds to meet 791
new circumstances. They even go a step farther and test the efficacy of their charms before selling them, or at least claim to do so. If the charm is an *ody basy* (charm against gunshot wounds) the *ombiasy* will hang it up in front of a *lamba* ("cloth mantle") and fire at it from a distance of ten or twelve feet. If it has been made properly, the *lamba* will be uninjured and the bullet will be found lying on the ground flattened, as though it had struck a rock. If the charm is an *ody omby* (cattle *ody*, protecting herdsmen and bull baiters) the *ombiasy* puts it on and tries its efficacy by thrusting against his thigh an ox horn which has been made as sharp as possible. If the charm is good, the horn cannot pierce his skin.

Every charm has its associated *fady*, a taboo or prohibition, 777
which must be learned by the maker as a part of the formula, and 842
which is told to the purchaser. Apparently it is not necessary for the maker to observe this *fady* himself, except while actually engaged in the manufacture of the charm, but the person using the charm must observe it consistently or the charm will immediately lose its virtue. The *fady* for *ody zaza* (charms to obtain children) are most numerous. It is forbidden for a woman wearing one to eat food directly from the pot, to lend her mat or *lamba* to another person, or for anyone to use them. She is forbidden to run races, or to poke her finger into a child's cheek to make it laugh. It is also forbidden for anyone to stop a woman wearing such a charm by standing in front of her with both arms held out sidewise. At the time a woman assumes an *ody zaza* she announces these *fady* to everyone in the village and a person who breaks or causes her to break one of them will be called before the village assembly, reprimanded and, if it was done maliciously, fined.

The *ody basy* has as a *fady* the pointing of a bamboo water bottle 777
toward the door of the owner's house, unless water is being poured 784

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777 out at the time. The owner of an *ody vary* (charm to promote the
784 growth of rice) has two *fady:* to throw out the burned rice from the bottom of a cooking pot instead of eating it and to arrange the hair while in the rice field. The owner of an *ody tolona* (charm for wrestling) must not eat mashed manioc, which would make the muscles soft. The owner of an *ody omby* (cattle charm) must abstain from boiled taro leaves for the same reason. The charm against scorpions (*ody hala*), the contents of which have already been described, has three *fady* associated with it. The owner must never kill scorpions, pick up live coals or a brand from the fire with his hands, or eat the fruit of the *lofika* vine unless he has peeled it himself with his teeth. *Ody tembote* (for curing illness) have a great variety of *fady* varying with the nature of the complaint.

If the owner of a charm breaks its *fady*, the charm immediately loses all power. He must take white earth and make a spot with it in the middle of his forehead and on either cheek. The power of the charm then returns.

A person usually acquires the benefits of a charm by simply wearing it or keeping it in his house, at the same time observing the *fady*, but there are a few charms which require an inoculation, like that already described for the scorpion charm. When an *ody fôlaka* [755] (a charm for skill in curing fractures) is bought, an incision is made in the heel of the purchaser's right hand and a little of the medicine rubbed in. Part of a charm to make blow-gun arrows deadly also consists in splitting the lip and inserting a little of the medicine. Apparently these were the only charms with inoculation in ancient times, but some forty years ago an Imerina slave who was very expert in bull baiting introduced a charm for that purpose which required it and it is now sometimes used with charms against lightning, *ody tandraka*, in imitation of the Imerina practice.

All charms must be treated with respect and must not be handled more than is necessary. Especial pains are taken to keep them out of the way of children, for if they play with them injuries may result. [754] Charms for working evil, such as killing enemies, etc., are especially dangerous and it is thought unsafe to keep them in the house.

[432] Charms can be sold without ceremony either by their makers or by persons who have themselves bought them. The transfer is complete and there is no danger to the seller. On the other hand, it is dangerous to discard a charm, for this offends it and it may turn its powers against its owner. To prevent this, the owner takes a fungus called *olotafina*, grates it on a stone and puts some of the

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powder on the middle of his forehead, on either cheek and on his tongue. In general, the only charms which will be discarded are evil ones which have accomplished their object.

Charms for the family or lineage are much less numerous than those for the individual. Nearly all such groups seem to have *ody andro* (charms to bring general good fortune), which are kept in the dwelling of the family head. There are also charms against hail and locusts. Apparently one family or individual in each village will have such a charm which is used for the benefit of the whole group. The locust charm, *ody valala*, consists of a small basket containing scrapings from the roots and shoots of a plant called *ramanjavana*. The name means "to make clouds," because a little vapor flies up when the plant is cut. When a locust swarm is sighted, the charm is brought out and hung on a pole on the side of the *kianza* ("village square") from which the locusts are coming. A fire is made under it with the leaves of the same plant, producing dense clouds of smoke. The charm against hail was not learned. Among the pagan Imerina, every village had its hail and locust charms, each with its guardian, who received a small subsidy from the inhabitants.

Every Tanala village has a charm and many have two. The main charm is called the *tepanony*. Some famous *ombiasy* is called in to make it at the time the village is founded. He determines the proper materials by divination, pounds them together, adds a piece of silver money, and then buries the whole in the center of the *kianza* ("village square"). Over the charm are planted roots of four plants, the *sonjo* ("taro"), *sody fafana*, *ahibita*, and *arivotombelona*. The spot is usually enclosed by a little rectangle of stone slabs set on edge. In some villages the plants are watered and tended, in others they have been allowed to die. If the village moves as a whole, the *tepanony* is usually dug up and reinterred at the new site. The *tepanony* protects the village from pestilence, also from lightning and malevolent ghosts, if the divination has shown that there will be danger from these at the site chosen. It does not protect from enemy attack.

The second village charm is known as the *kovavy* and has the special function of protecting from enemies. Apparently most villages had a *kovavy* in ancient times, but with the establishment of peace they have become unnecessary and have mostly disappeared. The *kovavy* was placed in a small fenced enclosure just outside the principal gate. Apparently the form was rather variable. In a few cases it seems to have been a wooden image, set with its face toward

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621 787 777 the path. That at Ambohimanga, the former capital of the Tanala Menabe, was made from various leaves buried in the earth. Over this a large-leaved plant, also called the *kovavy*, was planted. Each year the top of the plant was cut off and the bark scraped from the stump for 2 or 3 inches below. The right ear of an ox was cut and blood from it rubbed on the stump. Leaves were plucked from the plant, pounded, and mixed with water which was given to the ox to drink. The ox was the property of the village *ombiasy* and the same one was used each year. After this inoculation the ox was turned loose in the forest. The ox was restless, wandering constantly, and whenever he crossed the trail of an enemy coming to attack the village he would begin bellowing and would come at once to the *kovavy* and stand there bellowing. The direction from which he came showed that from which the enemy was coming and the villagers would have time to prepare for the attack.

777 342 In addition to the types of charms just outlined there were charms to bless houses and bring fortune to their inhabitants. These were buried on the site before the house was built.

825 777 The crocodiles in the Manandriana River were rendered innocuous by a charm thrown into the river long ago. The *fady* for this charm was that in crossing the river one must paddle with a spade or axe instead of a regular paddle and that one must not wash a *lamba mena* ("shroud") in it. So long as these rules were observed the crocodiles did no damage, but they have been ignored since the coming of the French, with the result that crocodiles now carry off domestic animals, although they still do not attack people.

The native name for charms in general is *tamango*, *mohara* or *ody*, the terms being used interchangeably.

HEALING

755 One of the principal duties of the *ombiasy* is healing. When a person becomes ill he goes to the *ombiasy*, or sends for him, and pays an advance fee of 1.20 to 1.50 francs, arranging at the same time for a larger fee to be paid after the cure. The *ombiasy* makes the *sikidy* to learn the cause of the illness and prescribes from his knowledge, or, if the case is not clear, makes the *sikidy* a second time to find the remedy. The remedy is usually a mixture of herbs, compounded as a charm. Part of the charm is put in water. The sick person drinks some of this and bathes his whole body with the rest. Another part of the medicine is done up in a little cloth bag and worn around the patient's neck. There is always a *fady* which the patient

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has not been done, the child is not accounted a member of the tribe, no matter how pure its blood, and is debarred from burial in the gens tomb. Emigrant families will keep the umbilical cords of their children for years, sending them back for this rite when some member of the family returns. The Ikongo apparently do not do this and the whole rite seems to have less social implication. Probably both it and the idea of sacred rivers have been borrowed from the southeast coast in fairly recent times.

DESTINY OF THE CHILD

All the Malagasy have a strong belief in destiny and think that the future of an individual is indicated by the day of his birth (see *vintana*, pp. 212–214). The Tanala Ikongo believe this and put to death children born on particularly unlucky days, fearing that they will bring misfortune upon the family. The child is killed within a few hours of delivery, being buried in an ant hill or plunged head down into a jar of boiling water. Although there is strong social pressure, its destruction is optional with the parents and if it is allowed to live for two or three days it is thenceforth safe. Among the Menabe, on the other hand, the idea of lucky and unlucky birth days is still poorly developed. They claim that the *vintana* ("calendar for divination") is a recent innovation and several of my informants did not even know on what *vintana* day they were born. They say that they never put children born on unlucky days to death, and, although the practice may exist, it is certainly rare. If a child falls ill the *ombiasy* may say that the sickness is due to the child's destiny and bathe it with medicines to change this, but if the child is healthy and vigorous its birth day destiny is usually ignored.

Among the Zafiakotry gens of the Menabe a child's destiny is thought to be determined by its appearance at birth. The members of this gens are normally dark. If a light-colored child is born the mother is at once suspect, but if its parentage is unquestionable, it is thought that it will grow into a malevolent sorcerer, leper or thief. Informants denied that such children would be killed, but I suspect that they are disposed of often. Another gens, the Maromena, is extremely light, hardly darker than Mediterranean Europeans, and is said to have similar beliefs regarding dark children, but I was unable to verify this. Such beliefs offer a concrete example of the way in which a society may influence the physical type of its members.

Twins seem to be very rare among the Menabe, but there is no feeling about them. Being a twin has no influence upon a person's destiny.